

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 2 and 10; and amend Claims 1, 3-9 and 11-15 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus comprising a housing, ~~and a screw extruder~~ the housing including at least a screw built into the housing, a ceramic material being introduced into the housing and extruded by way of a forward end extrusion port by rotating the screw, wherein:

~~wherein the screw built in the screw extruder~~ includes a pressure portion, an extended portion arranged on ~~the~~ a forward end extrusion port side of the pressure portion, and a kneading portion arranged between the pressure portion and the extended portion for kneading the ceramic material; and

the pressure portion has a feed rate per revolution which progressively decreases toward the forward end extrusion port, and the extended portion has a feed rate per revolution which progressively increases toward the forward end extrusion port.

2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 1 ~~or 2~~, in which the relation $L/R \geq 1.0$ holds, where R is ~~the~~ an outer diameter of the extended portion and the L ~~the~~ is a length thereof.

4. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 1-or-2, wherein the ratio of the feed rate per revolution at the a back end ridge of the extended portion to the feed rate per revolution at the a front end ridge of the pressure portion is not less than 1.02.

5. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 1-or-2, in which the ratio of the average feed rate at the a ridge of the extended portion to the average feed rate at the a ridge of the pressure portion is not less than 1.02.

6. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 1-or-2, in which the feed rate per revolution of the kneading portion is smaller than that of the a forward end of the pressure portion and the a back end of the extended portion.

7. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 1-or-2, in which a filter for filtering the ceramic material is arranged at the forward end extrusion port of the ~~screw extruder~~ housing, and the a distance between the filter and the a forward end of the screw is between 1 mm and 30 mm inclusive.

8. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 1-or-2, in which a mold for a honeycomb structure is arranged on the a side of the

~~screw extruder~~ housing near to the forward end extrusion port, whereby ~~the~~ a ceramic honeycomb structure ~~can be~~ is molded.

9. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus comprising a screw extruder including a housing having screws built therein adapted to rotate so that ~~the~~ a ceramic material introduced into the housing is extruded by way of ~~the~~ a forward end extrusion port, wherein:

~~wherein~~ the screws built in the screw extruder include a pressure portion and an extended portion arranged at a position nearer to the forward end extrusion port than the pressure portion and having ~~the~~ a feed rate per revolution which progressively ~~increased~~ increases toward the forward end extrusion port; and

the pressure portion has a feed rate per revolution which progressively decreases toward the forward end extrusion port.

10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim ~~9 or 10~~, in which the relation $L/R \geq 1.0$ holds and where R is ~~the~~ an outer diameter of the extended portion and L ~~the~~ is a length thereof.

12. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim ~~9 or 10~~, in which the ratio of the feed rate per revolution at ~~the~~ a back end ridge of

the extended portion to the feed rate per revolution at the a front end ridge of the pressure portion is not less than 1.02.

13. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 9-~~or-10~~, in which the ratio of the average feed rate at the a ridge of the extended portion to the average feed rate at the a ridge of the pressure portion is not less than 1.02.

14. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 9-~~or-10~~, in which a filter for filtering the ceramic material is arranged at the forward end extrusion port of the screw extruder, and the a distance between the filter and the a forward end of the screws is between 1 mm and 30 mm inclusive.

15. (currently amended) An extrusion molding apparatus according to ~~claim~~ Claim 9-~~or-10~~, in which a mold for a honeycomb structure is arranged on the a side of the screw extruder near to the forward end extrusion port, whereby the a ceramic honeycomb structure is molded.